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After Uvalde, holiday weekend sees shootings nationwide

BY MICHAEL TARM and COREY WILLIAMS
Associated Press

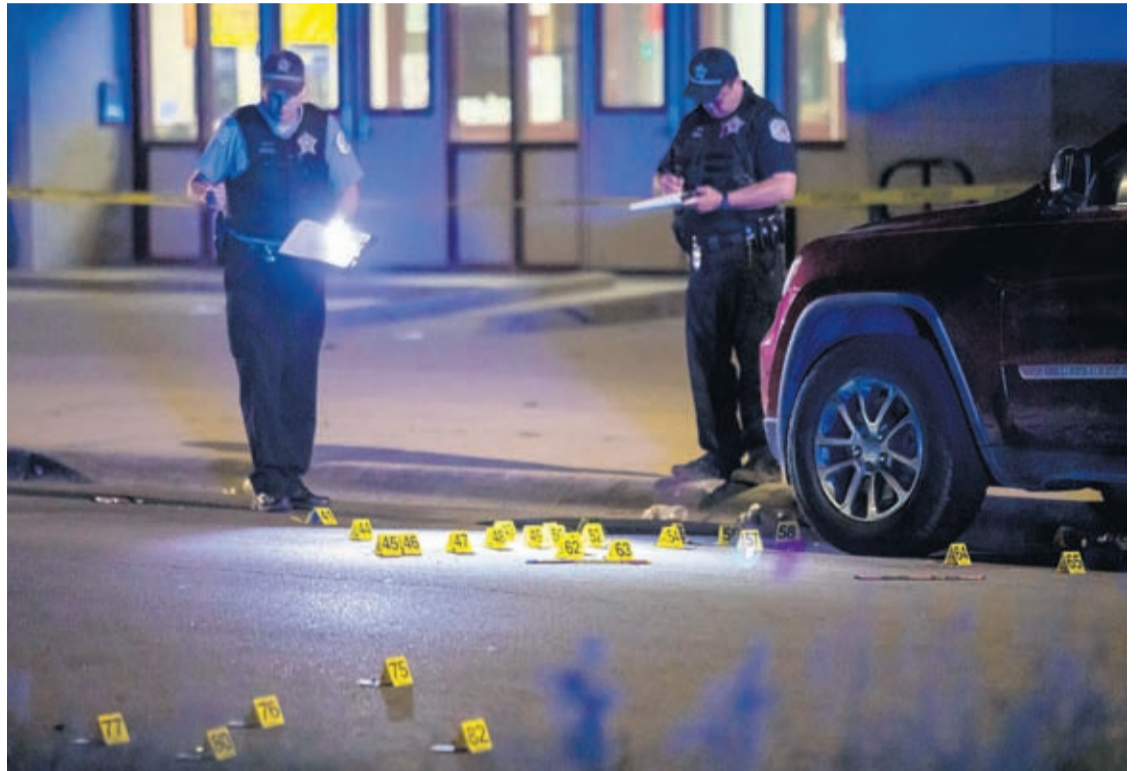
CHICAGO (AP) — Even as the nation reeled over the massacre of 19 children and two teachers at an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas, multiple mass shootings happened elsewhere over the Memorial Day weekend in areas both rural and urban. Single-death incidents still accounted for most gun fatalities.

Gunfire erupted in the predawn hours of Sunday at a festival in the town of Taft, Oklahoma, sending hundreds of revelers scattering and customers inside the nearby Boots Café diving for cover. Eight people ages 9 to 56 were shot, and one of them died.

Six children ages 13 to 15 were wounded Saturday night in a touristy quarter of Chattanooga, Tennessee. Two groups got into an altercation, and two people in one of them pulled guns and started shooting.

And at a club and liquor store in Benton Harbor in southwestern Michigan, a 19-year-old man was killed and six other people were wounded after gunfire rang out among a crowd around 2:30 a.m. Monday. Police found multiple shell casings of various calibers.

Those and others met a common definition of a mass shooting, in which four or more people are shot. Such occurrences have become so regular, news of them is likely to fade fast.



Chicago police investigate on the 800 block of South Karlov Avenue, where a 16-year-old girl was among five people seriously wounded in a shooting near Daniel Webster Elementary School in the Lawndale neighborhood on the West Side, early Sunday, May 29, 2022, in Chicago.

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After Uvalde, holiday weekend sees shootings nationwide



Yvonne Fields, left, and her daughter, Tanya Fields, both of Detroit, say their family plans to spend time closer to home during the warm-weather holidays, on Wednesday, May 25, 2022, in Detroit, due to shootings and random violence occurring in Detroit and other cities.

Associated Press

Continued from Front

There were at least two incidents in Chicago between late Friday and Monday that qualified as mass shootings, including one near a closed elementary school on the West Side in which the wounded included a 16-year-old girl. Single-fatality shootings also rocked families and communities. In Arkansas a 7-year-old girl was killed Saturday in a busy area near the Little Rock Zoo, in what police described as “an isolated event involving acquaintances.” And on Chicago’s South Side, the body of a young man slain at an outdoor birthday party lay on the sidewalk early Sunday, covered by a white sheet. His mother stood nearby, crying. Overall, Chicago recorded 32 gunfire incidents over the weekend in which 47 people were shot

and nine died. In the wake of the Uvalde shooting, by an 18-year-old who legally purchased an AR-style rifle, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott and other Republican opponents of tougher gun laws quickly pointed at Chicago as an example of how such measures don’t work, saying, “more people are shot every weekend (there) than there are in schools in Texas.” High rates of gun violence in Chicago have made a series of Democratic governments there, including that of current Mayor Lori Lightfoot, vulnerable to criticism — sometimes from within their own party. But the assertions by Abbott and others are misleading and oversimplify the situation in the country’s third-largest city. Many guns used in the killing of Chicagoans were initially bought in other states with less stringent gun

laws, like Indiana and Mississippi. Chicago officials also note that the city records fewer murders per capita than many other smaller U.S. cities. Police chiefs there and in other cities cancelled days off to boost the numbers of officers over the holiday, hoping it would act as a deterrent. Independent conflict mediators also hit the streets, using social media to identify simmering conflicts with the potential to explode into real-world violence. In Detroit, Police Chief James White promised to strictly enforce a curfew aimed at youths and teens after three people were wounded during a shooting earlier this month in Greektown, a popular downtown restaurant and entertainment district. Such strategies may have worked in individual cases, but statistics from several cities didn’t indicate

violence was kept at or below levels from previous years. Chicago’s Memorial Day weekend death toll was three times last year’s. It’s long been a rule of thumb in northern cities that hot weather means more violence. Temperatures in Detroit and Chicago were in the 80s — unseasonably warm — during the three-day weekend, bringing more people outside and increasing the chances of clashes, often between rival gangs. Alcohol at holiday parties can fuel personal beefs, some of which first fester online. “The seasons may not have much of an impact on shootings in Los Angeles, where the weather is always good,” said Rodney Phillips, a violence prevention worker and former gang member in Chicago. But in his city, Memorial Day weekend typically marks “the start of the killing season,” he said. Residents like Yvonne Fields, of Detroit, say they are especially cautious when Memorial Day rolls around. She, her children and grandchildren spent time closer to home this weekend. “The holidays are not like they used to be,” Fields said. “The gangs have taken over. They do drive-by shootings. Everyone is living in fear.” Police in big cities often say most homicides have some tie-in to gangs, though others point to poverty and the desperation that comes with it as underlying causes. An organizational shift over the past three decades, from top-down gangs led by identifiable leaders who could assert control to more fragmented, loosely structured groups, has also contributed to the violence. “These gang factions are getting younger and younger, bolder and more impulsive,” Phillips said. “It’s alarming. It’s often children shooting children these days. Malik Shabazz, who helps lead neighborhood safety and anti-crime patrols in Detroit, said the Detroit New Black Panther Nation/New Marcus Garvey Movement he founded looks for spikes in crime during the holidays when people gather in groups and have more free time away from work. “What I see is both the perps and the victims of (shootings and violent crime) are becoming younger and younger, and the crime is becoming more heinous,” said Shabazz, 59. “ And people bring their guns and people have beef, ‘now I can shoot you and I can stab you over an issue of respect, not talk it out or ignore it and walk it off.’” □

Inspectors ask for authority to go after more COVID fraud

By JENNIFER McDERMOTT
Associated Press

Inspectors general need more authority to go after fraud in the COVID-19 relief programs, the independent committee overseeing federal pandemic relief spending said Tuesday.

The agencies watchdogs' authority to administratively prosecute fraudsters is limited to fraud of \$150,000 or less from COVID-19 relief programs and the Department of Justice is too busy for cases under \$1 million—a gap that must be closed, the Pandemic Response Accountability Committee said.

Michael Horowitz, head of the committee and the inspector general of the Department of Justice, said the \$150,000 threshold is far too low given the scope of the fraud in programs set up to help businesses and people who lost their jobs due to the pandemic. He's asking Congress to modify provisions in the law on fraud committed against the federal government, to raise the maximum amount of a fraud claim that may be handled administratively to \$1 million.

The request was highlighted in the committee's semi-annual report to Congress released Tuesday.

"It can't be the case that people come away from this thinking there's a certain level of fraud that's just OK, or a certain level of improper payments that's just OK," Horowitz said in an interview with The Associated Press before the report was released. "We don't believe that as IGs, and we want to get to the bottom of that. So it's a very important tool and every dollar matters."

Out of more than \$5 trillion in pandemic relief spending, more than 1 million awards under \$1 million have been given out, according to the committee. Inspectors general nationwide are focused on multi-million dollar cases of alleged fraud that are turned over to the Department of Justice for prosecution. Horowitz said he was not aware of any cases being brought for below \$150,000,

though he does know of cases that they would like to prosecute administratively involving hundreds of thousands of dollars. Most U.S. attorneys would not pursue cases for under \$1 million because they are overwhelmed with other fraud cases, he added.

Republican Sen. Chuck Grassley of Iowa is sponsoring a bill that would make the change. It has bipartisan support, including from co-sponsor Democratic Sen. Dick Durbin of Illinois, who chairs the Senate Judiciary Committee.

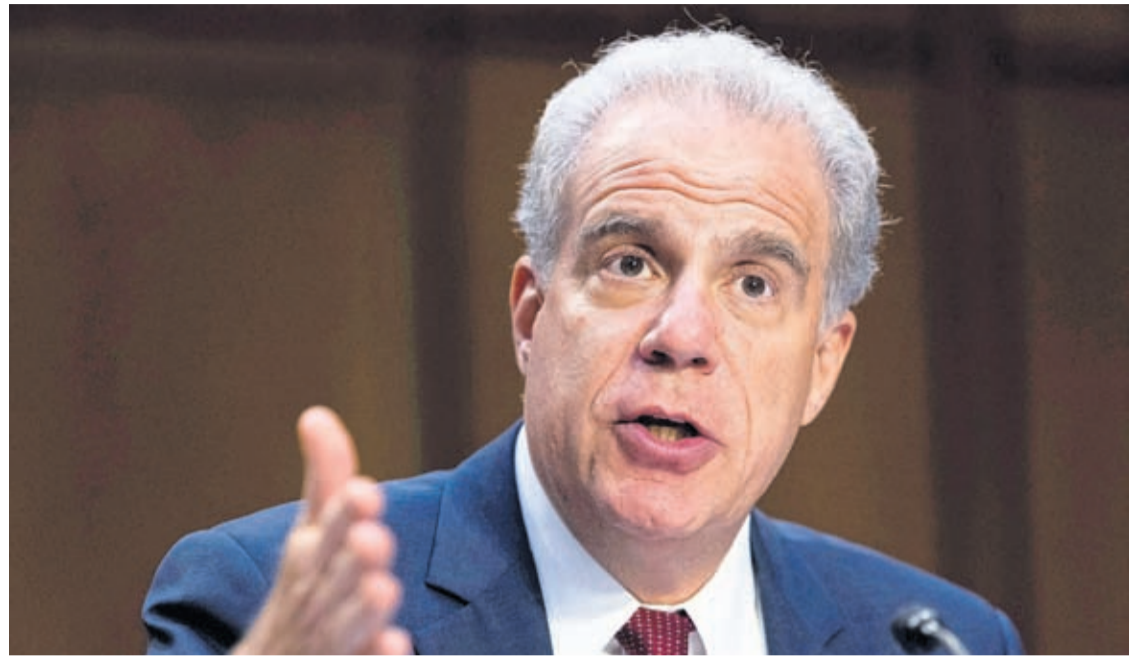
The Pandemic Response Accountability Committee was created by Congress in March 2020. It brings together the inspectors general offices to oversee pandemic relief emergency spending and investigate fraud and improper payments spread out among more than 400 programs implemented by 40 federal agencies.

Its report to Congress also stressed the need to better use the data the federal government already has, and improve data collection, particularly when the prime recipient of a grant shares it with sub-recipients to follow the funding from the federal to the local level.

Billions in loans were paid to potentially ineligible recipients at the beginning of the pandemic because the Small Business Administration didn't check the Treasury Department's "do not pay" list, the report said, and billions went to applicants with foreign IP addresses. Horowitz said "simple data matching" at the agency level should've flagged hundreds of applications using the same phone number from a gas station in Texas before the committee found it.

"That shouldn't be the case, right? An agency should be able to figure that out," he said. "That's not sophisticated data analytics."

Horowitz said agencies have substantially improved their ability to verify eligibility for pandemic relief payments, but "there is still a significant way to go."




Department of Justice Inspector General Michael Horowitz testifies during a Senate Judiciary hearing on Capitol Hill, Sept. 15, 2021, in Washington.

Associated Press

That prompted the committee to set up a data analytics center, which it has


asked Congress to keep in place to use when the federal government responds

to future emergencies with relief spending. □



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California to unveil groundbreaking Black reparations report

By JANIE HAR

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

California's first-in-the-nation task force on reparations will release a report Wednesday documenting in detail the harms perpetrated by the state against Black people and recommending steps to address those wrongs, including expanded voter registration, making it easier to hold violent police accountable and improving Black neighborhoods. It also recommends the creation of a special office that would, in part, help African Americans document their eligibility for financial restitution. The report, which runs 500 pages, will be the first government-commissioned study on harms against the African American community since the 1968 Kerner Commission report ordered by then-President Lyndon Johnson, task force Chair Kamilah Moore said.

"I hope that this report is used not only as an educational tool, but an organizing tool for people not only in California but across the U.S. to educate their communities," she said, adding that the report also highlights "contributions of the African American commu-



In this image made from video from the Office of the Governor California Gov. Gavin Newsom signs into law a bill that establishes a task force to come up with recommendations on how to give reparations to Black Americans on Sept. 30, 2020, in Sacramento, Calif.

nity and how they made the United States what it is despite ongoing oppression and degradation." Gov. Gavin Newsom signed legislation creating the task force in 2020, making California the only state to move ahead with a study and plan. Cities and universities are taking up the cause with the Chicago suburb of Evanston, Illinois, becoming the first U.S. city to make reparations available to Black residents last year. The task force voted in March to limit reparations to descen-

dants of Black people who were in the United States at the end of the 19th century, overruling reparations advocates who want to expand compensation to all Black people in the U.S. The report, to be released by the state Department of Justice, marks the halfway point for the two-year task force's work. The draft report does not provide a comprehensive reparations plan, which is due to lawmakers next year. The report is expected to lay out how California supported slavery before it was

technically abolished and oppressed Black residents through discriminatory laws and practices in education, home ownership, employment and the courts. African Americans make up nearly 6% of California's population yet they are overrepresented in jails and prisons. They were nearly 9% of people living below the poverty level and made up 30% of people experiencing homelessness in 2019, according to state figures.

Despite it being a "free" state, an estimated 1,500

enslaved African Americans lived in California in 1852, according to the draft report. The Ku Klux Klan flourished in California with members holding positions in law enforcement and city government. African American families were forced to live in segregated neighborhoods that were more likely to be polluted.

Moore said that a state Office of African American or American Freedmen Affairs could help Black residents file claims and trace their lineage to prove eligibility for individual restitution.

The task force in its draft report also recommends compensating people who were forced out of their homes for construction projects such as parks and highways and general renewal, as happened to San Francisco's historically Black and once-thriving Fillmore neighborhood.

"Other groups that have suffered exclusion, oppression, and downright destruction of human existence have received reparations, and we should have no less," said Rev. Amos Brown, the committee's vice chair and pastor of Third Baptist Church in the Fillmore. □

Associated Press



Sarah Palin, a Republican seeking the sole U.S. House seat in Alaska, speaks during a forum for candidates Thursday, May 12, 2022, in Anchorage, Alaska.

By LARRY NEUMEISTER

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The judge who presided over Sarah Palin's libel case against The New York Times denied her request Tuesday for a new trial, saying she failed to introduce "even a speck" of evidence neces-

sary to prove actual malice.

U.S. District Judge Jed Rakoff made the assertion in a written decision as he rejected post-trial claims from Palin's lawyers. They had asked him to grant a new trial or disqualify himself as biased against

her, citing several evidentiary rulings by Rakoff that they said were errors. Those ranged from how the questioning of jurors occurred during jury selection, to how jurors were instructed when they asked questions during deliberations.

Judge: No 'speck' of proof in Palin's libel case against NYT

"In actuality, none of these was erroneous, let alone a basis for granting Palin a new trial," the judge said. Rakoff wrote that regardless of her post-trial motions, Palin was required at a trial earlier this year to show that an error in a published editorial was motivated by actual malice — a requirement in libel lawsuits involving public figures.

"And the striking thing about the trial here was that Palin, for all her earlier assertions, could not in the end introduce even a speck of such evidence," he said. Lawyers for Palin declined to comment on Rakoff's ruling. Lawyers for The New York Times did not immediately respond to comment requests. The libel lawsuit by Palin, a one-time Republican vice-presidential candidate and former governor of Alaska, centered on the newspaper's 2017 editorial falsely linking her campaign rhetoric to a mass shooting, which Palin asserted damaged her reputation and career. The Times acknowledged their editorial was inaccurate, but said it quickly

corrected the errors they called an "honest mistake" never meant to harm Palin. Rakoff announced in February even before a jury completed its deliberations that he intended to dismiss the lawsuit because Palin had failed to show that the Times acted out of malice. Jurors themselves rejected Palin's lawsuit the next day. Rakoff said he thought it was fair to all parties not to wait for the jury's verdict because he had already decided as a matter of law that the Palin hadn't proven her case.

Her attorneys cited the timing of Rakoff's announcement as one more reason a new trial should be ordered. □

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Canada to cap the market for handguns with new law

By ROB GILLIES

TORONTO (AP) — Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government introduced legislation Monday that would put a freeze on importing, buying or selling handguns.

"We are capping the number of handguns in this country," Trudeau said.

The regulations to halt the growth of personally owned handguns is expected to be enacted this fall.

"It will be illegal to buy, sell, transfer or import handguns anywhere in Canada," the prime minister said. Families of shooting victims joined him at a press conference in Ottawa.

Canada already has plans to ban 1,500 types of military-style firearms and offer a mandatory buyback program that will begin at the end of the year. Trudeau said if someone really wants to keep their assault weapon it will be made completely inoperable. Canada already expanded background checks.

Trudeau has long had plans to enact tougher gun laws but the introduction of the new measure comes after mass shootings in Uvalde, Texas, and Buffalo, N.Y., this month.

Public Safety Minister Marco Mendicino called the legislation the most significant step Canada has tak-



Monday, May 30, 2022. Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announces new gun control legislation in Ottawa, Ontario, on

Associated Press

en in a generation.

"Countries that do a good job of controlling guns do a good job of controlling gun violence," Mendicino said in an interview with The Associated Press.

Bill Blair, minister of emergency preparedness, said Canada is very different from the United States.

"In Canada, gun ownership is a privilege not a right," Blair said. "This is a principal that differentiates ourselves from many other countries in the world, notably our colleagues and friends to the south."

Canada has had far fewer mass shootings than the U.S. in part because of a lack of easy access to guns, though the U.S. population also is far larger than Canada's.

Blair noted guns are often smuggled in illegally from the U.S., which he noted has one of the largest small arms arsenals in the world. The government plans to fight gun smuggling and trafficking by increasing criminal penalties, providing more tools to investigate firearms crimes and strengthening border

measures. Trudeau said increased funding already helped border officials double the amount of smuggled guns confiscated at the U.S. border.

The government also said the bill would also allow for the removal of gun licenses from people involved in acts of domestic violence or criminal harassment, such as stalking.

The bill would create a new "red flag" law allowing courts to require that people considered a danger to themselves or others surrender their firearms to police.

The government said the measure would guard the safety of those applying through the process, often women in danger of domestic abuse, by protecting their identities.

The government said it will require rifle magazines to be permanently altered so they can never hold more than five rounds and will ban the sale and transfer of large-capacity magazines under the Criminal Code.

"Canada can teach us a lot," tweeted Bruce Heyman, a former U.S. ambassador to Canada under the Obama administration.

Trudeau said his government recognizes the vast majority of Canadians who own guns are responsible but the level of gun violence is unacceptable. Mendicino said they are aware the announcement could lead to a rush to buy guns before the law is enacted and urged Parliament to pass it as soon as possible.

The new measures are assured of passing in Canada's Parliament as the ruling Liberals and leftist opposition New Democrats have enough votes.

Pierre Poilievre, who is running to be leader of the Conservative party, said law-abiding gun owners should be respected and dangerous criminals should be jailed. □

Group urges ICC to probe alleged use of mines in Libya war

CAIRO (AP) — Human Rights Watch on Tuesday called for the International Criminal Court to investigate allegations of the use of landmines in 2019 by Russian paramilitaries fighting in Libya.

According to the New York-based watchdog, new data has emerged from Libyan demining groups linking mercenaries from Russia's Wagner Group to the use of "banned booby traps" in Libya during an offensive by east-based Libyan forces trying to capture the capital of Tripoli from rival militias.

The Wagner Group backed the offensive of the east-

based forces led by commander Khalifa Hifter, who was also supported at the time by the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Russia. Hifter's offensive collapsed in the spring of 2020, when Turkey and Qatar stepped up their military support to his rivals in western Libya. Libya plunged into turmoil after a NATO-backed uprising in 2011 toppled dictator Moammar Gadhafi, who was later killed. It has for years been split between rival administrations, each backed by different militias and foreign powers.

Lama Fakhri, HRW's director for Mideast and North Africa, said a "transparent

and international" inquiry is needed to look into the use of land mines around Tripoli.

The group said that a demining group with the Tripoli-based Defense Ministry reported that mines and other explosive ordnance killed at least 130 people and wounded 196, mostly civilians, between May 2020 and March 2022 in Tripoli's southern suburbs.

HRW cited a tablet left on a Libyan battlefield by a Wagner mercenary that contained maps of the locations of 35 unmarked anti-personnel mines. The tablet was obtained by the BBC in early 2021. □



Mourners pray for fighters killed in airstrikes by warplanes of Field Marshal Khalifa Hifter's forces, in Tripoli, Libya, April 24, 2019, as officials in Libya's U.N.-backed administration said they plan to present evidence to Moscow of Russian mercenaries from the Russian private security contractor Wagner Group fighting alongside their adversary, the forces of Hifter, in their country's war.

Associated Press

Sea feud with China flares as Marcos prepares for presidency

By **JIM GOMEZ**

MANILA, Philippines (AP) —

The Philippine government announced Tuesday a new diplomatic protest against China over disputes in the South China Sea, a long-thorny issue that has flared anew as the next Philippine president prepares to take office next month.

The Philippines has filed hundreds of diplomatic protests against Beijing in recent years for what it considers acts of aggression in the disputed waters, despite improved ties between Beijing and Manila under outgoing President Rodrigo Duterte, whose six-year term ends on June 30. The territorial conflicts are among the key challenges President-elect Ferdinand Marcos Jr. will face when he takes office after his landslide electoral victory on May 9. He has said he will use diplomatic means with China over the issue, the same approach adopted by Duterte, who has been criticized for not taking a more aggressive stance against Beijing's increasingly assertive actions in the resource-rich and busy waterway.

The Department of Foreign Affairs said Tuesday it filed a diplomatic protest over China's imposition early this month of an annual fishing



Chinese structures and buildings on the man-made Fiery Cross Reef at the disputed Spratlys group of islands in the South China Sea are seen on March 20, 2022.

Associated Press

ban lasting three and a half months that covers areas in the disputed waters where "the Philippines has sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction." It said the ban is not limited to Chinese fishing vessels and violates the 1982 U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea and a 2016 arbitration tribunal's decision that invalidated Beijing's vast historic claims in the strategic waterway and upheld the Philippines' sovereign rights in a stretch of coastal waters called its

exclusive economic zone. China does not recognize the arbitration ruling and continues to defy it. The Chinese ban "has no basis in law, and undermines the mutual trust, confidence, and respect that should underpin bilateral relations," the department said in a statement. "The Philippines calls on China to comply with its obligations under international law" and "cease and desist from the conduct of illegal actions," including its

"annual practice of declaring a fishing ban over areas that extend far beyond China's legitimate maritime entitlements," it said. Separately, Philippine foreign affairs officials said late Monday that the department summoned a Chinese diplomat in early April to protest alleged harassment by the Chinese coast guard of a research vessel in the South China Sea. They said they were reviewing other recent vio-

lations of Philippine rights in Second Thomas Shoal and Reed Bank, which lie within Manila's exclusive economic zone but which China also claims, before taking further diplomatic action.

The department said it summoned a Chinese Embassy official in Manila to protest the "harassment by the Chinese coast guard" of research vessel R/V Legend, which was undertaking a survey of undersea fault lines along the Manila Trench west of the northern Philippines.

Philippine diplomats did not provide other details, but people involved in the scientific research told The Associated Press last month that a Chinese coast guard ship shadowed R/V Legend, which was carrying five Filipino scientists and an unspecified number of Taiwanese counterparts, from March 25 to 30.

A Chinese coast guard ship maneuvered about 2 to 3 nautical miles (3 to 5 kilometers) from the R/V Legend, causing concern among the scientists because the research vessel was towing a long survey cable in the sea, said Carla Dimalanta of the National Institute of Geological Sciences at the University of the Philippines. □

Japan court: Nuclear plant's tsunami safeguards inadequate



The Tomari Nuclear Power Plant of Hokkaido Electric Power Co., is seen in Tomari village, Hokkaido prefecture, northern Japan, on Oct. 2, 2020.

Associated Press

By **MARI YAMAGUCHI**

TOKYO (AP) — A Japanese court on Tuesday ordered a utility not to restart a

nuclear power plant because of inadequate tsunami safeguards, backing the safety concerns of resi-

dents at a time the government is pushing for more reactors to resume power generation after pledging to ban imports of Russian fossil fuels.

The Sapporo District Court ruled that Hokkaido Electric Power Co. must not operate any of the three reactors at its coastal Tomari nuclear power plant in northern Japan because the inadequate tsunami protection could endanger people's lives.

The utility said it will appeal the ruling, which it called "regrettable and absolutely unacceptable."

A massive earthquake and a tsunami over 15 meters (49 feet) high hit another nuclear power plant in Fu-

kushima in northeastern Japan in 2011, knocking out its cooling systems and causing three reactors to melt and release large amounts of radiation.

Many of Japan's nuclear power plants have been shut down since the disaster for safety checks and upgrades.

The reactors at the Tomari plant have not operated since 2012.

The government has been urging plants to resume operations to replace fossil fuels and reduce global warming. It is now accelerating that push because of fears of a power crunch following its pledge to phase out imports of Russian coal, liquefied gas and oil as part

of international sanctions against Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

About 1,200 people from the area of the Tomari plant and elsewhere filed a lawsuit in late 2012 demanding that it be decommissioned because of inadequate earthquake and tsunami protections. In its ruling, the court dismissed that demand.

Chief Judge Tetsuya Taniguchi said Hokkaido Electric failed to take steps to address safety concerns and demonstrate the adequacy of the plant's existing seawall, which was built after the Fukushima disaster but has since faced questions about its weak foundation. □

3 nations join international team probing Ukraine war crimes

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — Three more nations on Tuesday joined an international investigation team probing war crimes in Ukraine, and the International Criminal Court prosecutor said he plans to open an office in Kyiv, amid ongoing calls for those responsible for atrocities since Russia's invasion to be brought to justice.

Estonia, Latvia and Slovakia signed an agreement during a two-day coordination meeting in The Hague to join Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine in the Joint Investigation Team that will help coordinate the sharing of evidence of atrocities through European Union judicial cooperation agency Eurojust.

ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan said the teamwork underscores the international community's commitment to the rule of law. "I think it shows that there is this common front of legality that is absolutely essential, not just for Ukraine ... but for the continuation of peace and security all over the world," he said.

Moscow's invasion of Ukraine has been widely condemned as an illegal act of aggression. Russian forces have been accused of killing civilians in the Kyiv suburb of Bucha and of repeated attacks on civilian infrastructure including hospitals and a theater in the besieged city of Mariupol that was being used as a shelter by hundreds of civilians. An investigation by The Associated Press found evidence that the March 16 bombing killed close to



Karim Ahmed Khan, International Criminal Court chief prosecutor, speaks during a news conference at the Ministry of Justice in the Khartoum, Sudan, Aug. 12, 2021.

Associated Press

600 people inside and outside the building. Since Russia invaded on Feb. 24, the AP and PBS series Frontline have verified 273 potential war crimes. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has denounced killings of civilians as "genocide" and "war crimes," while U.S. President Joe Biden has called Russian President Vladimir Putin "a war criminal" who should

be brought to trial. The team that met Monday and Tuesday at Eurojust's headquarters in The Hague was established in late March, a few weeks after the ICC opened an investigation in Ukraine, after dozens of the court's member states threw their weight behind an inquiry. Khan has visited Ukraine, including Bucha, and has a team of investigators — the largest

team of prosecutors ever deployed by the international court — in the country gathering evidence.

Khan now plans to work toward opening an office in Ukraine "in the next few weeks." Ukraine's prosecutor general, Iryna Venediktova, said that her office has already opened some 15,000 criminal investigations related to the war and identified over 500 suspects, including Russian ministers, military commanders and propagandists. She said her office was ready to proceed against some 80 of them. Last week, in the first case of its kind linked to the war, a Ukrainian court sentenced a captured Russian soldier to the maximum penalty of life in prison for killing a civilian. On Tuesday, a court in Ukraine convicted two Russian soldiers of war crimes for the shelling of civilian buildings and sentenced both to 11 1/2 years in prison. Russia staunchly denies its troops are responsible for atrocities. The Defense Ministry said earlier this month that "not a single civilian has faced any violent action by the Russian military." □

Dissident artists go on trial in Cuba, face years in prison

By ANDREA RODRÍGUEZ

HAVANA (AP) — Two dissident artists went on trial in Cuba on Monday, facing years in prison after being arrested last year following protests, according to other activists.

Prosecutors are seeking a 10-year sentence for rapper Maykel Castillo and six years for artist Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara, according to art curator Claudia Genlui.

Both were involved with a group known as the San Isidro Movement — named for the neighborhood where Otero Alcántara lives — that had attracted unusually wide support among prominent Cuban artists and musicians in 2020.

Otero Alcántara was arrested on charges of public disorder in July 2021. Castil-

lo, also known by his stage name Osorbo, was arrested in May 2021 on charges of disrespect and resisting authority. Officials did not confirm the trial was taking place, but a police guard was posted at the court and half a dozen European diplomats had gathered in hopes of entering. Usually only family members of the defendants are allowed.

While officials did not comment this time, in the past they have said people were being prosecuted for breaking the law rather than for political activism. Castillo was among the composers of the song "Patria y Vida" — "Fatherland and Life" — which won a Latin Grammy award this year and has become a sort of anthem for critics of the Communist govern-

ment. It's a twist on the official slogan, "Fatherland or Death!"

Otero Alcántara had become known for works featuring the Cuban flag in ways that some considered disrespectful.

Both men were arrested before the two days of widespread demonstrations in July 2021 protesting shortages, power outages and the government.

In November 2020, police broke up a sort of sit-in at Otero Alcántara's house in support of another rapper, Denis Solís, who had been sentenced for prison for insulting a police officer. Castillo was among those taking part in the sit-in.

Officials said they acted to enforce COVID-19 health restrictions, but it prompted about 200 people to stage a larger, almost unprece-



Diplomats from several countries wait outside the court building where a trial is going on for Cuban artists Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara and Maykel Castillo in Havana, Cuba, Monday May 30, 2022.

Associated Press

dent protest outside the Culture Ministry. That broke up after members of the group said they'd won an unusual government vow of greater tolerance for independent art.

Otero Alcántara also was

the focus of protests by other artists following his arrest last year. He was hospitalized — reportedly during a hunger strike — to demand the return of works that authorities had confiscated when he was detained. □



Aqua Grill restaurant: The taste of New England with Caribbean flair

ORANJESTAD — One thing is for certain: Chef Scott Scheuerman and his team are famous for getting people hooked, just like the fish on your plate. You will get the taste of home fused with Caribbean while dining in elegance. Scheuerman will tell how Aqua Grill established its

name since opening in 2002, and why it reaped accolades from such prestigious travel publications as Fodor's, who says, "This hip restaurant is heaven on earth for seafood lovers, who will find fresh fish galore..." Now is your chance to taste Aqua Grill's NEW seasonal menu and create a lifetime culinary memory.



'A Scheuer thing'

Secretly, we all know that the success of a restaurant begins in the kitchen. That is where the chef creates his magic and for Aqua Grill the culinary team has won an assortment of awards for their continuous delivery of 'haute-cuisine del mar.' Classic seafood is mingled with contemporary ideas resulting in surprising dishes that soon made the restaurant a must-dine, confirmed by established travel media specialists like Fodor's and Frommer's.

American-born Scheuerman, executive chef of Aqua Grill, is thrilled about 'his restaurant'. "We started out as a New



England style seafood restaurant, patterned after Boston style. But we quickly blended into some Caribbean, local flair... if you will. We do still offer the traditional New England dishes like whole Maine lobster, northern seafood plates like the salmon, tuna and swordfish. We buy also from the local fisherman to offer Caribbean dishes like snapper and grouper which are number one sellers in our restaurant being the most prevalent local fishes. Catches like wahoo, mahi mahi and brasil are welcome too, anything that comes out of the water we embrace."

Fresh import from Boston

Aqua Grill flies in their own shipments on a weekly basis mostly from Boston because the price quality balance is the best, says the chef. "We are unique in this. Number one priority is buying fresh, we mean not frozen. Our original concept is New England seafood and we stick to that concept. They have a wonderful assortment of oysters and lobsters as well." Aqua Grill also offers international fusion type of menu items; actually all you wish for is there. A very balanced menu awaits you. "And we have options for meat lovers and vegetarians/vegans too. We, however, do not mix it up too much because we believe we do not want to lose our identity as a seafood restaurant," Scheuerman adds.

Sublime menu

Now is the time to indulge in Aqua Grill's dinner experience. The established restaurant offers a sensational menu. We present to you a Raw Bar with among others fresh Oysters on the half Shell, Littleneck Clams, Peruvian Ceviche and Lobster Salad. Steamed Dumplings and Prawns or Steamed Mussels seduce you from the open view kitchen.

After that continue your gastronomic trip to heaven with the house specialties like Main Lobster, steamed or broiled or maybe you crave for the best Alaska King Crab Legs you have ever tasted?

You haven't reached your destination yet because there are more main course options to blow you away: Seared Chilean Sea Bass, Cioppino or Blackened Tuba are just some to mention.

Take a pick out of Aqua Grill's delicious desserts to finally conclude yes, this beats it all. We will be back for more. ☐

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Net foreign assets surged
Summary of the Monthly Bulletin of March 2022

Monetary developments

Compared to February 2022, money supply expanded by Afl. 48.5 million to Afl. 5,404.8 million in March 2022, resulting from an increase in net foreign assets (+Afl. 381.8 million) and a decrease in net domestic assets (-Afl. 333.3 million).

In March 2022, the expansion in net foreign assets of the banking sector was due to net purchases of foreign exchange of Afl. 685.3 million from the public, mostly related to other investment and foreign exchange revenue from tourism exports. These were partly offset by net sales of foreign exchange of Afl. 303.5 million to the public, mainly asso-

ciated with payments for goods imports. The drop in the domestic component of money supply was caused by decreases in domestic credit (-Afl. 330.5 million) and non-credit related balance sheet items (-Afl. 2.8 million). The decline in domestic credit resulted from lower net claims of the banking sector on the public sector (-Afl. 329.2 million) and lower claims of the banking sector on the private sector (-Afl. 1.3 million). The drop in net claims of the banking sector on the public sector was the result of a rise in government deposits (+Afl. 329.2 million). The reduction in claims of the banking sector on the private sector was caused by a decrease in consumer credit (-Afl.

14.1 million), and increases in loans to enterprises (+Afl. 8.3 million) and housing mortgages (+Afl. 4.5 million).

Inflation

The consumer price index (CPI) for March 2022 noted a 4.0 percent rise year-over-year (YOY) compared to a 3.5 percent increase (YOY) for February 2022. The main contributor to this increase was the "Transport" component. The 12-month average inflation rate was 2.1 percent in March 2022, compared to 1.7 percent in February 2022.

Government

Total government revenue amounted to Afl. 86.3 million in March 2022, Afl. 15.5 million more than the same

month of the previous year. The rise in government revenue resulted from an increase in tax revenue (+Afl. 16.4 million) and a decrease in nontax revenue (-Afl. 0.9 million).

The growth in tax revenue was mainly driven by expansion in income from import duties (+Afl. 5.0 million), turnover tax (B.B.O./B.A.V.P) (+Afl. 4.9 million), and wage tax (+Afl. 3.1 million). In contrast, income from profit tax (-Afl. 3.9 mil-

lion) decreased.

Tourism

The number of stay-over visitors amounted to 95,912 in March 2022, which is 46,945 visitors (+95.9 percent) more than in March 2021. The North American market, the Latin American market increased by 39,017 visitors (+89.8 percent), 3,132 visitors (+165.3 percent), and 3,731 visitors (+147.0 percent), respectively. □

Weekly COVID-19 update reports the recovery of 687 people

The public health agency of Aruba known as DVG publishes a weekly update, where locals and visitors alike can be informed on the development of coronavirus on the Island.

In this week's update DVG informed that 687 people recovered from COVID-19 this week, as well as 718 new cases.

The amount of active cases for this week is of 326 and the amount of death related to or due to COVID-19 has stayed at 213. This data illustrates that the new cases of COVID-19 have a weekly average of 103 positive cases per day, and a weekly positivity rate of 42 percent per day.

Currently there are 4 people hospitalized either with or for reasons related to COVID-19, of which all patients are in the general floor. In Colombia there are no COVID-19 patients from Aruba hospitalized. □



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Culture & Tourism

Episode CLV- 156

Etnia Nativa facilitates cultural awareness, education and safeguards Aruba's heritage by elevating each reader into an island keeper state of mind. Be encouraged to discover in every episode the true native effect, live it, get more reasons to love Aruba behind the beaches and live up your stay in an incredibly wonderful way.

Our main objective is to educate and spread awareness among our readers. Because when you love and value that little you have, the greatest desire is to protect it. In this episode we propose to contaminated you with a good predisposition to share our concern in conserving your fragile tiny but marvelous destination. Did you know that during most of the 20th century, tourism and culture were viewed separately. Cultural resources were considered part of the cultural heritage of each country and were related to the education he way of life of the local population. At the same time, tourism was seen as a leisure-related activity, separate from the daily life and culture of the local population. This concept gradually changed and from the 1980s, "cultural tourism" came to be seen as an important source of economic development for many turistic destinations.

Etnia Nativa knows that culture and tourism have a mutually beneficial relationship which can strengthen the attractiveness and competitiveness of Aruba since culture is an increasingly important element of the tourism product as it creates distinctiveness in a crowded global marketplace.

Our island is a fragil tourist destination by nature, so we need to take in consideration the iminent and destructive trends of an an out of hand demographic exploitation versus thiny islnds geo-physical capacity and limitations.

The most important element is to create awareness of our assets which could be lost without ever knowing of their existence, redefine the product destination, respect local essences of existing cultural aspects and all native species, since these are at risk of becoming extinct.



It is time to realize that we must end overexploitation. This way of doing business has proven to feed disastrous results.

Motivating the visitor to discover the material, intellectual, spiritual and emotional characteristics of their travel destination, guiding them to learn and live extraordinary native cultural experiences which encourages local heritage preservation.

Etnia Nativa is a trendsetting entrepreneur in cultural tourism emphasizing on issues such as loyal return visitor complaints, native Aruban's dissatisfaction with product saturation. Loss of charm from the moment the Aruban friendliness in services and attention has been

substituted by cheaper imported labor force, add to that the fears destruction of nature, archaeological sites and our ecosystems, the dramatic demographic growth and influx of migrants and illegal aliens. All this devalues the quality of service; elevates taxes, affects spending, the economy and life as a whole. Certain aspects such as the commitment to environmental sustainability and an innovative approach frame works of conscious practices offers highly relevant that should be considered.

However, it is important to bear in mind that Cultural Tourism must be carried out in a sustainable way and through strategies that identifies relevant actors, opportunities of the land, the cultural resources and the elaboration of an operational plan that generates the greatest possible benefit for the community. If you love Aruba its origins and its cultural heritage, be part of the exclusive visitors of Etnia Nativa: a cozy museum/home. □



Etnia Nativa a private residential houses collections of native art, archaeological artifacts and historic furniture, while the facilities themselves are the result of the transformation of recycled materials.

Meet Anthony Croes, our columnist at his home! Book your visit Whatsapp + 297 592 2702- or mail: etnianativa03@gmail.com

Millennial Money: Don't let your first car be a \$30K mistake

By COLIN BERESFORD of NerdWallet

Buying your first car is already an intimidating experience; in the midst of historic supply shortages, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. In March of this year, the average price of a used car was \$27,246, according to Cox Automotive — an automotive marketplace and data company — or 28% higher than it was a year ago. With those price increases, monthly payments have also swelled. Average payments for used cars reached \$488 in the last quarter of 2021, according to Experian. On top of that, the average loan term for used vehicles was just over 67 months, or more than five years.

For many, cars are a necessity. If you have little or no credit, no co-signer or just a limited budget, it can be easy to accept a loan that pushes your budget or binds you to a car for six, even seven years.

Not being ready before stepping onto a car lot can open the door to making a purchase you'll later regret. Set your limits before you ever stop at a dealership; with the right preparation, you can keep your purchase from becoming a burden.

SECURE A LOAN

Your first step is calculating what loan payments you



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Associated Press

can afford and the total loan amount that's within your budget.

Aim to keep your monthly loan payment below 10% of your take-home pay, and if you're buying a used car, keep your loan term under 36 months. If you're looking for a new vehicle, keep the term under 60 months. Limiting your loan term will save you money on interest and will lower the risk of your loan becoming upside-down — owing more than the car is worth. Numbers in hand, start looking for a lender that will

give you a loan. Getting preapproved for a loan before visiting dealer lots can give you a better negotiating position, keep you from going over budget and reduce what you pay in interest. With little or no credit history — especially since you have not had a car loan before — your best shot at being approved for a loan at the lowest interest rate possible is to apply with a co-signer. But if that's not a possibility for you, there are still financing alternatives available:

— One of the first places to

look are banks and credit unions, particularly institutions that you have an established relationship with. — Search your area for lenders with first-time buyer programs, which put conditions on the amount you can borrow and the vehicles you can buy but dispense with some of the credit requirements.

— You can also look for loans from online lenders that offer bad-credit auto loans, since they will often have low or no minimum credit scores. These loans can carry interest rates of

over 25%, so a year after taking one on, you can try to refinance for lower rates.

PICK THE RIGHT CAR

Finding a cheap car used to be easy — or at least easier than it is now. If you have a \$10,000 budget, your options are limited, but that doesn't mean there aren't options.

With a limited budget, most choices will be older, used cars, and that increases the annual cost to maintain your car. A 2021 Consumer Reports study found that 2016 model year vehicles cost \$205 to maintain over the previous 12 months, while 2011 model year vehicles cost \$430.

In addition to maintenance costs, there's also fuel, insurance, registration and taxes that all add to the cost of owning a vehicle. As you search for a car, look into the cost of ownership, since it will differ from car to car.

The total cost of owning your vehicle, including your loan payment, shouldn't exceed 20% of your take-home pay. Although some costs can't be significantly reduced, you can minimize others — such as future maintenance, repairs and fuel — with the right car.

"The most important thing to look for is a car with good maintenance history," Joey Capparella, a senior editor at Car and Driver, said in an email. □

Canceled flights mar first weekend of summer for travelers

Associated Press

The unofficial start of summer over the Memorial Day weekend offers a troubling glimpse of what lies ahead for travelers during the peak vacation season.

U.S. airlines canceled more than 2,800 flights from Thursday through Monday, or about 2% of their schedules, according to tracking service FlightAware.

Delta Air Lines, usually among the top performers, had the worst record among major carriers with more than 800 canceled flights over the five-day span.

"This was a chance for airlines to show that last sum-

mer's delays would not be repeated this summer, and yet, it was not to be," said Helene Becker, an analyst for banking firm Cowen, who blamed the disruptions on bad weather, air traffic control delays, airline crew members calling in sick, and long security lines at some airports.

"We expect a busy summer, and are concerned about the industry's ability to handle the demand," Becker said.

The good news was that cancellations were down sharply on Tuesday. FlightAware reported only about 60 by early afternoon on the East Coast.

Various forecasts of high numbers of travelers over the weekend proved to be accurate. The Transportation Security Administration reported screening more than 11 million people at airport checkpoints from Thursday through Monday. That was down 9% from the same days in 2019, but an increase of almost 25% over last year. Crowds of just under 2.4 million on both Thursday and Friday nearly matched the pandemic high set on the Sunday after Thanksgiving last year.

Delta, when asked to comment Tuesday about its weekend troubles, pointed to a statement it issued



Travelers queue up at the north security checkpoint in the main terminal of Denver International Airport, Thursday, May 26, 2022, in Denver.

Associated Press

last week. The Atlanta airline said it was being challenged by several factors including rising COVID-19

cases among workers, and it trimmed its July and August schedules in an effort to improve reliability. □

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 39 Hamlet

- 1 Green extras stone
- 40 Shucking units
- 5 Overlook units
- 9 Heartburn
- 41 Snowman's visitor
- 11 Annual man's visitor
- 12 Pink shade

DOWN

- 13 Zeal
- 14 Mine material
- 15 Money business
- 17 Support
- 19 "My word!"
- 20 Police trap
- 21 Cacao holder
- 22 Unfettered
- 24 Likely
- 26 Waits in the dark
- 29 Serving feat
- 30 Warning, watchdog-style
- 32 Soaking up the sun
- 34 West of films
- 35 Took a part
- 36 Conjure up
- 38 Long attack

P	H	A	S	E	S	D	R	A	W	
S	E	C	U	R	E	R	O	L	E	
I	N	T	R	A	C	T	A	B	L	E
	F	S	T	O	P					
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A	L	O	E		A	L	L	I	E	S
M	I	N	T		R	E	D	O	E	S

Yesterday's answer

- 1 "Twilight"
- 2 Old
- 3 Not round-
- 4 Greek
- 5 Grifter's
- 6 Rainbow
- 7 High
- 8 Private's boss
- 10 White rat, e.g.
- 11 Joined the choir
- 16 Luanda native
- 18 Highland attire
- 21 Job extra
- 23 Swelled
- 24 Spiny tree
- 25 Annoy
- 27 Eastern robe
- 28 Medusa's hair
- 29 Degrade
- 30 Await
- 31 Gaggle group
- 33 Frat party sights
- 37 Big truck

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8
9			10		11			
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	20					21		
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32			33				34	
35					36	37		
38					39			
40					41			

A X Y D L B A A X R
is L O N G F E L L O W

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

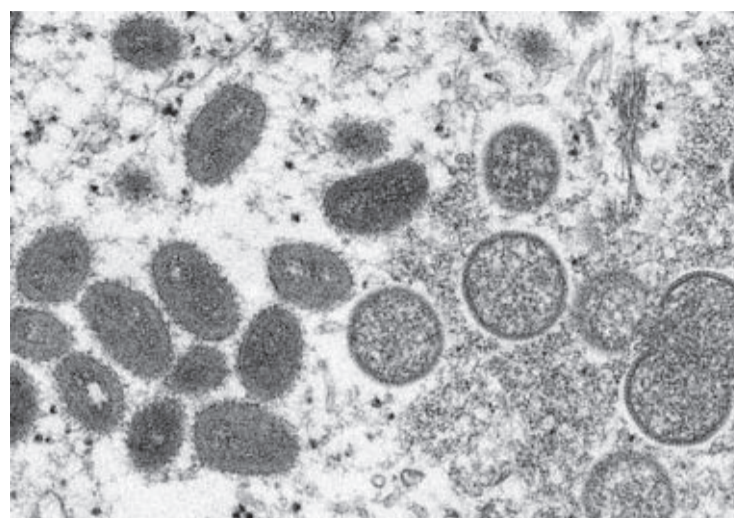
6-1 CRYPTOQUOTE

E A B E J I F X G X O U O Y H J

E H J O T A , E Y S J F N O H H E R N Y

C E R F J Y W X . — W R Z R F P R
Yesterday's Cryptoquote: OUR GREATEST GLORY IS NOT IN NEVER FALLING, BUT IN RISING EVERY TIME WE FALL. CONFUCIUS

WHO: Monkeypox won't turn into pandemic, but many unknowns



This 2003 electron microscope image made available by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows mature, oval-shaped monkeypox virions, left, and spherical immature virions, right, obtained from a sample of human skin associated with the 2003 prairie dog outbreak.

Associated Press

By MARIA CHENG
AP Medical Writer

LONDON (AP) — The World Health Organization's top monkeypox expert said she doesn't expect the hundreds of cases reported to date to turn into another pandemic, but acknowledged there are still many unknowns about the disease, including how exactly it's spreading and whether the suspension of mass smallpox immunization decades ago may somehow be speeding its transmission.

In a public session on Monday, WHO's Dr. Rosamund Lewis said it was critical to emphasize that the vast majority of cases being seen in dozens of countries globally are in gay, bisexual or men who have sex with men, so that scientists can further study the issue. She urged those at risk to be careful.

"It's very important to describe this because it appears to be an increase in a mode of transmission that may have been under-recognized in the past," said

Lewis.

"At the moment, we are not concerned about a global pandemic," she said. "We are concerned that individuals may acquire this infection through high-risk exposure if they don't have the information they need to protect themselves."

She warned that anyone is at potential risk for the disease, regardless of their sexual orientation. Other experts have pointed out that it may be accidental that the disease was first picked up in gay and bisexual men, saying it could quickly spill over into other groups if it is not curbed.

Last week, WHO said 23 countries that haven't previously had monkeypox have now reported more than 250 cases. On Monday, the U.K. announced another 71 monkeypox cases.

Lewis said it's unknown whether monkeypox is being transmitted by sex or just the close contact between people engaging in sexual activity and described the threat to the general popu-

lation as "low."

Monkeypox is known to spread when there is close physical contact with an infected person, their clothing or bedsheets.

She also warned that among the current cases, there is a higher proportion of people with lesions that are more concentrated in the genital region and sometimes nearly impossible to see.

"You may have these lesions for two to four weeks (and) they may not be visible to others, but you may still be infectious," she said.

Last week, a top adviser to WHO said the monkeypox outbreak in Europe, U.S., Israel, Australia and beyond was likely linked to sex at two recent raves in Spain and Belgium. That marks a significant departure from the disease's typical pattern of spread in central and western Africa, where people are mainly infected by animals like wild rodents and primates.

Scientists haven't yet determined whether the monkeypox outbreak in rich countries can be traced to Africa, but the disease continues to sicken people on the continent.

On Monday, authorities in Congo said nine people have died of monkeypox in 2022. Dr. Aime Alongo, chief of the Sankuru health division in Congo, also said 465 cases have been confirmed, making it one of the worst-hit nations in West and Central Africa.

Nigerian authorities confirmed the country's first monkeypox death this year, in addition to six more cases. WHO says thousands of cases are reported from Nigeria and Congo every year. □

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'No joke': Initial rounds of National Spelling Bee get tough

By **BEN NUCKOLS**
Associated Press

OXON HILL, Md. (AP) —

One speller ran off the stage in the middle of her time at the microphone, saying she needed to pee. Another tried to walk back to her seat after spelling her first word correctly, only to be reminded she had a vocabulary word next. During one particularly brutal stretch, 10 consecutive spellers heard the bell that signals elimination.

The Scripps National Spelling Bee used to begin with a handshake. Now it starts with a slap to the face.

Leaner and meaner in its post-pandemic iteration, the bee returned to its usual venue on Tuesday for the first time in three years, and spellers were greeted with a new preliminary-round format that gave them no time to get comfortable.

"The prelims is no joke. Every stage of the bee is so important," said Dhroov Bharatia, a 13-year-old from Plano, Texas, who finished fourth last year.

In years past, the early on-stage spelling rounds did little beyond weeding out the weakest or most nervous spellers. The real action was a written test that determined who would make the cut for the semifinals.

But during last year's mostly virtual bee, the bee's new executive director elimi-



Annie-Lois Acheamong, 13, from Accra, Ghana, reacts during the Scripps National Spelling Bee, Tuesday, May 31, 2022, in Oxon Hill, Md.

Associated Press

nated the test, and that structure continued as 229 spellers took the stage for this year's fully-in-person competition. Well over half the spellers who competed by midafternoon Tuesday were eliminated.

Spellers had to get through three words in one turn at the microphone to advance to Wednesday's quarterfinals. First, they were given a word from a provided list of 4,000 — more than twice as many as in years past. Then, they had to answer a multiple-choice vocabulary question about a word on the same list. Finally, they had

to spell a word that could be found anywhere in Webster's Unabridged dictionary.

Annie-Lois Acheamong, one of three spellers from Ghana, didn't get that far. She labored successfully through her first word, "coulrophobia" — fear of clowns — and then was asked to define "edamame." She smiled initially, but when she crossed her legs and couldn't stand still, it was clear something else was going on.

"I think I'm going to pee myself," the 13-year-old eighth grader said. "Can I go pee? I'm very sorry."

She scurried off the stage before she got an answer from the stunned judges, who paused the competition and conferred about how to handle the situation.

"That was a first," head judge Mary Brooks, who's been involved with the bee for 50 years, said later.

The judges ultimately decided to let Annie-Lois return to the microphone after the day's last scheduled speller. Although she could have been eliminated for exceeding the 30-second time limit for the vocabulary question, Brooks said the speller's clock was

paused because she was experiencing a legitimate emergency.

There is precedent for pausing the clock during what Brooks called "extenuating circumstances," notably in 2004 when Akshay Buddiga fainted on stage but recovered to finish in second place.

Braydon Syx of West Blocton, Alabama, might not get that far, but his time in front of the microphone on Tuesday encapsulated the newly riveting drama of the early rounds.

The 13-year-old seventh grader took his first plane ride to compete in this year's bee. Braydon's first word was "ormolu" — a gold-colored alloy of copper, zinc and sometimes tin. He spelled out "O-R-M" and then took a long, excruciating pause before spitting out the final three letters. He stretched his arms out to his sides after identifying the definition of the word "tremulous" — not a bad description of his demeanor at the microphone.

"It was really scary," Braydon said, "but I also felt really happy at the same time. It was a weird feeling." Then came "bromegrass" — any grass of a large genus of grasses native to temperate regions. Something about the word was bothering him.

"Can you say it again?" he asked. □



Rachel Zegler attends the "West Side Story" premiere in New York on Nov. 29, 2021. Zegler will star in Lionsgate's planned "Hunger Games" prequel.

Associated Press

Rachel Zegler to star in 'Hunger Games' prequel

NEW YORK (AP) — Fresh off her breakthrough role in Steven Spielberg's "West Side Story," Rachel Zegler will star in Lionsgate's planned "Hunger Games" prequel.

The studio announced Tuesday that Zegler will play Lucy Gray Baird in "The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes," an extension of the "Hunger Games" saga that takes place decades before the adventures of Jennifer Lawrence's Katniss Everdeen. Katniss played in the 74th Hunger Games;

Baird will be a part of the 10th Hunger Games.

Suzanne Collins, whose books were adapted into the \$3 billion blockbuster franchise, in 2020 published a prequel novel upon which "The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes" is based. In the film, Lucy Gray Baird, a tribute from the impoverished District 12, sings in a pivotal moment during the reaping ceremony. Zegler stars opposite Tom Blyth, who plays the 18-year-old Coriolanus Snow.

"Our casting team, Deb Zane and Dylan Jury,

spearheaded an exhaustive search, reading hundreds of actors in search of our perfect Lucy Gray. That search ended when Rachel Zegler blew the roof off with her depth and breadth of talent as an actor, singer, and performer," said producer Nina Jacobson in a statement. "Rachel is utterly compelling; just like Lucy Gray, her voice and charisma command the stage while her inner strength and humanity transform those around her." Lionsgate is to release the movie in theaters Nov. 17, 2023. □

Nelly Korda returns to golf not a moment too early

By DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

Nelly Korda has a coach who knows all about top golfers returning from an injury, how patience and belief can be just as critical as any physical therapy.

Among the messages Jamie Mulligan offered the 23-year-old Korda is that no one ever returned from an injury too late, even if that means starting on the biggest stage in women's golf. "I didn't want my first event back being the U.S. Women's Open," Korda said with a smile after playing nine holes at Pine Needles. "I was just more thinking like I want to be 100%, and that's all I was thinking. And then when I was 100%, I was going to set my eyes on what event I could come back at."

Korda hasn't played since Feb. 5, when she wrapped up a three-week start to the LPGA season in Florida with a tie for 15th. About a month later, she was gearing up for the California swing that included the first major of the year when she felt swelling in her left arm. Turns out it was a blood clot in the subclavian vein, and she had surgery in April. The rehab was in California so she could be close to Mulligan, the CEO of Virginia Country Club in Long Beach.



Nelly Korda speaks during a news conference after a practice round for the U.S. Women's Open golf tournament at the Pine Needles Lodge & Golf Club in Southern Pines, Tuesday, May 31, 2022. Associated Press

Mulligan, honored in January as the PGA Teacher & Coach of the Year, has been running Virginia for 22 years and has a long list of pupils.

One was John Cook, who had to stop midway through the 1989 season because of a broken hand. He rose to No. 3 on the PGA Tour money list a few years later. More recently was Patrick Cantlay, whose back injury was so severe it kept him out for the better part of three years.

To see Korda deliver such an athletic, graceful swing is to be easily impressed. What also caught Mulligan's attention was how she handled an injury that kept her away for longer than Korda would have wanted.

She was coming off the best year in women's golf — four LPGA titles, her first major at the Women's PGA Championship, a rise to No. 1 in the world and an Olympic gold medal in Tokyo. And then she started 2022

with COVID-19, followed by a blood clot two months later.

"She understood the big picture," Mulligan said Tuesday at Pine Needles in a brief chat after working with big sister Jessica Korda before meeting Nelly on the range. "She understood she needed to take the right steps. You can't come back too late. She used her full capacity to train in order to mend the right way, to keep her composure and be comfortable with

it."

There was one other message from Mulligan related to the belief.

"Even when you're sitting there, nothing is going to happen with your golf," he said. "It's been fun to watch her prepare."

In some respects, the U.S. Women's Open last year at Olympic Club is where it all began for Korda. She missed the cut and then began a run that took over the LPGA Tour.

Korda won the Meijer LPGA Classic in Michigan, came down to Atlanta and won the KPMG Women's PGA to reach No. 1 in the world, and then a month later was posing on the top podium with an Olympic gold medal draped around her neck. The No. 1 ranking didn't last long at the start of this year and now belongs to Jin Young Ko, who beat out Korda for the Race to CME Globe title in the final event last year.

The U.S. Women's Open has no shortage of compelling angles this year at Pine Needles. The prize money of \$10 million is the richest in women's golf. Michelle Wie West is back in the area where she won her only major at Pinehurst No. 2. Annika Sorenstam is playing at age 51, eligible from winning the U.S. Senior Women's Open. □

Prescod clocks 9.93 to win 100 meters at Golden Spike

OSTRAVA, Czech Republic (AP) — British sprinter Reece Prescod became the first European man to break 10 seconds in the 100 meters this season, clocking 9.93 seconds to win the Golden Spike meet on Tuesday. Prescod showed blistering pace over the last 20 meters to surge ahead of Yohan Blake of Jamaica and clock a personal best time despite running into a headwind. Blake was second in 10.05.

In the women's 100 meter hurdles, Olympic champion Jasmine Camacho-Quinn of Puerto Rico recovered from a slow start to finish first in 12.56 seconds. Pia Skrzyszowska of Poland

was second in 12.65 ahead of American Nia Ali, who clocked 12.69 in third.

Seven-time Olympic champion Allyson Felix finished second in the women's 200, more than half a second behind Aminatou Seyni of Niger who won in 22.21. The 36-year-old Felix is competing in her farewell season, with the American having announced that she is retiring at the end of the year. Ethiopia's Lamecha Girma dominated the men's 3,000 steeplechase with a world-leading time of 7 minutes, 58.68 seconds.

Another Olympic champion, Gianmarco Tamberi of Italy, cleared 2.30 meters to win the men's high jump.

In the rarely contested women's 300 hurdles, Femke Bol of the Netherlands clocked the fastest time ever to win in 36.86, more than one second faster than the previous best of 38.16 set by Zuzana Hejnova in 2013. The event does not have an official world record. Jerome Blake of Canada won the men's 200 in a photo finish ahead of U.S. sprinter Elijah Hall, with both clocking 20.14. Kenyan 17-year-old Emmanuel Wanyonyi won the men's 800 in 1:44.15 while Diribe Welteji led an Ethiopian sweep of the women's 1,500 in 3:59.19 ahead of Ayal Dagnachew and Netsanet Desta.



Netherlands' Femke Bol poses, after winning and setting a new world record in the 300 meters hurdles race, at the Zlata tretra (Golden Spike) Continental Tour athletic meeting, in Ostrava, Czech Republic, Tuesday, May 31, 2022.

Associated Press

World champion Anderson Peters of Grenada claimed

the men's javelin with a throw of 87.88 meters. □

Kepler's 3 RBIs help Twins beat Tigers 8-2



Minnesota Twins' Max Kepler hits a two-run single against the Detroit Tigers in the seventh inning of the first game of a baseball doubleheader in Detroit, Tuesday, May 31, 2022.

Associated Press

By **DAVE HOGG**
Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Max Kepler had three hits and drove in three runs to help the Minnesota Twins to an 8-2 win over the Detroit Tigers in the first game of Tuesday's doubleheader.

Kepler is hitting .320 with four homers and 12 RBIs in 25 at-bats against Detroit this season.

Minnesota's Devin Smeltzer (2-0) picked up the win, giving up two runs and six hits in 6 2/3 innings.

"Today's the best I've felt," Smeltzer said. "My fastball velocity and fastball command is the best it has been, I was able to move the ball up and down and my changeup was good." Tigers starter Rony Garcia (0-1) took the loss, allowing six runs and seven hits in five innings.

"We didn't do a good job

of controlling the top half of their lineup, and they did a pretty good job of controlling the top half of our lineup," Tigers manager A.J. Hinch said. "When that happens, it is an uphill battle."

Minnesota took a 2-0 lead in the first on a two-run double by Trevor Larnach, and the Twins added four more runs in the third.

Byron Buxton led off with a single — his first hit in 24 at-bats against Detroit this season — and scored on Kepler's double.

Jorge Polanco singled, and with one out Gary Sanchez hit a three-run homer to left for his sixth homer of the season.

Miguel Cabrera singled — career hit No. 3,030 — and scored in the fourth to make it 6-1, but Kepler added a two-run single in the seventh.

Daz Cameron ended Smeltzer's day with an RBI double in the seventh.

"The good thing about Devin is that he throws strikes," Sanchez said. "All his pitches were working today and he attacks the hitters. That plan works for us."

Tigers rookie Spencer Torkelson went 3-for-4 in the first game, his second straight three-hit game.

"I'm seeing the ball a lot better right now, and I'm definitely getting my good swing off in more at-bats," said Torkelson, who raised his batting average from .176 to .211. "This game can knock you down fast, but sameness is greatness. Stay the course and results are going to happen."

TRAINER'S ROOM

Twins: Shortstop Carlos Correa was placed on the COVID-19 list and replaced

by infielder Jermaine Palacios, who made his major-league debut in the first game. Kepler returned after missing Monday's game with a sore quadriceps. ... Sonny Gray (shoulder) played long-toss catch and is scheduled to do the same Wednesday. Tigers: DH Miguel Cabrera played after sitting out two games with back stiffness.

ROSTER MOVE

The Tigers optioned reliever Drew Carlton, who threw three innings in the first game, to Triple-A Toledo and activated Will Vest from the COVID-19 list.

SANCHEZ'S HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Sanchez, who has homered in the first two games of the series, has gone deep before in Detroit. On Aug. 22, 2017, he became the only player to clear the left-field seats with a homer

since Comerica Park opened in 2000. The home run was estimated at 493 feet, breaking the previous stadium record by nearly 30 feet.

"I didn't even know that record, but it is impressive," he said. "Every park is different, and I don't look to do anything better in this park than in any other."

UP NEXT

The teams finish the doubleheader with a night game. Detroit's Joey Wentz (0-1, 20.35) will make his second career start, while Minnesota's Cole Sands (0-0, 6.75) will start for the first time after two relief appearances. Both pitchers are serving as their team's 27th player for the doubleheader. Tigers utilityman Kody Clemens is expected to make his major-league debut in the second game. □